MEG CLARKE

I. Background - Meg grew up in Queens, New York. Her mother had been born and raised in Brooklyn; her father was from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and other of her relatives are from the western Pennsylvania area. (Her grandfather, Bob Clarke, was a resident of Mercer, Pennsylvania.) Meg graduated from St. Rose's College in Albany, New York, with a B.A. degree. Her major was in English. She went to the Catherine Gibbs Secretarial School and in September, 1970 was employed by CBS as a secretary/file clerk in the area of business affairs. She later became a legal secretary and worked for the Director of Business Affairs at CBS, Mr. Don Hamilton. She was later moved to research in the News Section, first as a secretary and in May or June of 1973 as a researcher. This has been her area of responsibility up to the present time and it was as a researcher that she assisted in the production of the documentary "The Guns of Autumn".

Meg recalls that in August of 1974 someone at CBS (perhaps Bill Leonard) suggested that the general subject of hunting would be a good idea for documentary. Meg was assigned responsibility of basic research in connection with the proposed documentary. She was told to visit Irv Drasnin who was the producer in charge of the project. Her recollection is that in the initial discussion it was indicated that CBS was interested in doing a documentary which would involve ordinary

people, rather than the celebrities which were featured in some of the hunting shows which had been on television. It was also brought out that one of the goals would be to have an appropriate distribution of different kinds of hunting, different locations, etc.

In this conversation with Irv Drasnin, Meg recalls that he mentioned that he had learned that there was a national hunting and fishing day celebration in November and he would like to try to get the thing underway in time to do some of the filming in connection with these celebrations. Specifically, Meg's assignment was to find different places to consider as possible filming sites, particularly in connection with the celebration of National Hunting & Fishing Day and to xerox relevant articles which she could find about hunting. It was emphasized that they were not looking for the "exotic" aspects of hunting, namely not to go out and film the shooting of Kodiac bears or African safaries, etc. Meg was also asked to determine the scheduled dates for various hunting seasons, which they knew, of course, were just ahead.

Asked if she had any particular reaction to the assignment, Meg said that she had no strong feeling about the assignment or about hunting at the time. The only thought that

crossed her mind, as she recalls, was the question "why me?" in terms of being given the assignment. She thought because of her absolute lack of any prior connection with hunting that there might be somebody else who would be better able to undertake the research.

Nevertheless, Meg got the research underway promptly. One of the first interesting statistics which she learned was that Pennsylvania ranked first in the number of hunting licenses sold each year. Michigan was second, and then California and New York.

Meg also collected data about National Hunting & Fishing Day and learned that it included celebrations, demonstrations, and educational programs. Meg prepared a list of the people she contacted and spoke to in connection with the investigation. These people were contacted for various purposes and a number of reasons. Sometimes she was inquiring about hunting regulations or statistics; sometimes she was seeking literature; other times specific data about places, etc.

Meg also prepared a list of the books and other periodicals which she examined. In looking at these materials she was trying to get information which might be of use in formulating the content of the documentary by learning as much as possible

about hunting in America; its purposes; it role in human life; hunting ethics; etc. (The list of people contacted and list of books examined can be found in the "Meg Clarke folder" in Volume 2 of Company Papers.) A basic plan for the show was prepared. It was not the goal to do either a pro-hunting or an anti-hunting documentary. The plan was to show representative scenes from a range of types and sites of hunting which showed what actually happened, whether it was good or bad. Meg's own reaction was that the Pymatuning sequence was a good section and did not show any bad hunting practices.

Meg later assisted in the preparation of the White Paper which outlines the basic plan for the show and which was prepared after a discussion with Bill Leonard.

II. Criteria for Selection of Segments Filmed for Use in the Documentary - A number of factors influenced what places were visited by the CBS camera crew. As stated above, it was the initial plan to try to get a representative cross-section of hunting in America. That, in and of itself, called for hunting of various types of game and hunting at various geographical locations. It also suggested the appropriateness of selecting hunting episodes at public hunting grounds and some at private reserves, etc.

Other factors, however, which entered into the selection process included:

(a) time and scheduling of hunting;

(b) cooperation of the persons in charge of the various hunting sites;

(c) the kind of game which was the object of the hunting; and

(d) other factors such as the impact which hunting had on local economy, on game management, a tie to history, etc.

They had hoped to do some scenes involving small game hunting but these had to be abandoned for basic scheduling reasons and because the films taken in other locations were

already sufficient to use all of the available time for the documentary. Also they took some scenes of elk hunting in Colorado which were not used because it was felt they were essentially duplicative and not very interesting. Finally, they had hoped to do some deer hunting in Pennsylvania but had to cancel these plans because of a conflict in schedule.

The filming period for the documentary was from September, 1974 to January of 1975.

III. The Pymatuning Segment - Meg personally participated in contacting the representatives of the Pennsylvania Commission, a contact which led to the filming at Pymatuning and was present at Pymatuning on the days when the filming took place. The first day they were there was the day before the hunting season opened. They were given a tour of the area and took pictures of geese which were at the site. A number of things were pointed out to them, including other types of birds such as egrets, nesting boxes, the location of the sanctuary which was referred to as a "stocking" area. Fred Servey conducted the tour and present in the party, in addition to Meg, were Irv Drasnin and the members of the camera crew, William Wagner and Richard Wiggins.

The second day of filming was the opening day of the hunting season for waterfowl. The crew was at the site very early in the morning. The pictures taken at Blind 21 were taken fairly late in the morning, sometime between 11:00 AM and 12:00 PM. Meg was not physically present at the Blind when the film was taken but was in the parking area which is quite some distance away.

Concerning the quotes attributed to Mr. Yocum in the Jimmy Jordan article which appeared in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on October 24, 1975 (see materials attached to "Yocum" section of witness file). Meg believes there are a number of

inaccuracies. For example, she does not believe that there were any pictures taken of arrests being made or citations being issued that morning when the shooting began before the scheduled time. Also, she does not believe Mr. Yocum was at the Blind when the film was taken but believes that he was back in the parking area with her and perhaps Irv Drasnin.

Also, there were no pictures taken of waterfowl shooting which were intentionally omitted from the documentary. Meg is absolutely satisfied that the camera crew and the staff fully complied with their proper standards in filming and editing the documentary. She does not view the documentary as showing geese being shot on the ground.

IV. Post-Broadcast Reaction - Meg recalls that there was substantial amount of criticism received about the documentary after it was broadcast. There was also some favorable correspondence received. More important, even the critical commentary did not critize every episode. For example, there was virtually no criticism about the Utah sequence except for what occurred at the dance or ball which was held and there was none of the episodes which dealt with the celebration of National Hunting & Fishing Day. Further, there was very little criticism or reference and critical remarks to the Pymatuning episode. Most of the criticism was directed toward the shooting of bears at the dump and to the incident involving the killing of the white deer. On balance, Meg feels that the range and focus of the criticism confirms that the documentary was not slanted; that it showed things as they occurred; and was a truly representative presentation of the matters which the film crew had seen. She also reiterates that there was no selectivity in the choice of either the episodes or the sites but all of that had been determined by the factors and criterias set forth above.

Dixon
FORSYTHE, CAMPBELL, VANDENBERG,
CLEVENGER & BISHOP, P. C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
111 SOUTH MAIN STREET
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
48104

Edw. Mallé.

8

Mr. Irv Drasnin
CBS NEWS
524 W. 57th Street
New York, N. Y. 10019